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ABSTRACT

This report discusses the role and status in China of the English language, the main foreign language in the country. The following topics are outlined: (1) The prevalence of English as a foreign language; (2) English within the educational system at preprimary through postsecondary levels, in preservice and inservice teacher training, in nonformal, adult education, and in distance education; (3) professional associations and organizations; (4) numbers and characteristics of English teachers; (5) instructional materials support and needs in the form of textbooks, software, and bookshops and libraries; (6) educational administration as it relates to English instruction at the ministry, provincial, and university levels; (7) development and planning for English instruction; (8) the extent of British, American, and other foreign and international agency support for English teaching; (9) commercial opportunities; (10) creative writing; (11) current research; and (12) other sources of information. (MSE)

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ENGLISH TEACHING PROFILE

Country: China

Date: December 1983

Since the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976 China has changed with astonishing speed, and in many unpredictable ways. The speed and unpredictability of change in this far from homogeneous country should not be forgotten when reading this profile.

1. ROLE AND STATUS OF ENGLISH

English is the foreign language in China. Its status is higher than that of any of the other languages taught here (Japanese, French, German and Russian being the major contenders).

It is not, in general, used as a medium of instruction however (though there are plans for certain subjects at university level to be taught at least partially in English).

At elementary school level it is rarely taught. (Mainly in special pilot schools attached to Foreign Language Institutes or Universities.) However, in Middle Schools, where a foreign language is learned from year one, it is overwhelmingly the majority language (approximately 80%).

Likewise in universities, training colleges and other tertiary level institutes it occupies pride of place. All tertiary level students, regardless of their special subject, are required to study a foreign language, usually English (again estimated at 80%).

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Although it is not used as a vehicle of communication within China, it enjoys great prestige as a cult (borne out by the popularity of such TV series as Follow Me, On We Go and English on Sundays, which are followed assiduously by audiences of millions; also by the phenomenal success of The China Daily, the English language newspaper).

The main reason for such popularity is that English is seen as one of the golden keys to science and technology, and often to direct personal self-advancement through promotion or study abroad. While few actually get to study abroad many aspire to and, through their aspirations, infect even those who have no hope at all, and very little opportunity even to meet foreigners. It is also, of course, a way of tapping the ocean of information and knowledge of the outside world, which was so long denied the Chinese people.

Since the 'Ten Years of Turmoil' there has been an explosion of translations of British and American authors. Whereas before most people could at best get as near to the present day as Jack London, Somerset Maugham or Dickens, they are now exposed to translations of writers as varied as Graham Greene, Iris Murdoch, and Arnold Wesker.

On the whole, books in the original are difficult to come by, except in special neibu bookshops, though the larger number of foreign teachers has tended to make more books available to the student community, if not to society at large. The Foreign Literature Publishing House has, however, issued a series of books in English translated from the Chinese. (Panda books.) Though these are aimed at the English-speaking world they are, like the China Daily, also read by Chinese.

The scientific world is in general well-supplied with necessary up-to-date books and periodicals. Key books and articles are translated widely.

Local authors do not write in English, but translation from English is a national industry (as are local unauthorised printings of books in English). Most universities, for example, have some staff permanently engaged in the translation of books and articles. (And many have on-campus printing houses to produce the local editions!)

The major periodicals dealing with foreign literature are World Literature (Shijie Wenxue), Foreign Literature (Waiguo Wenxue) and Reading (Dushu).

2. ENGLISH WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Pre-Primary - primary level

A very small number of pilot primary schools teach English.

Secondary Level

There are Junior Middle Schools, Vocational Schools and Senior Middle Schools.

Junior Middle School runs for three years. Following this students are selected either to go on to a further three-year course in a Vocational Middle School (with the aim of preparing them for a practical job) or to a Senior Middle School where they prepare for the national university entrance examination. A foreign language, usually English, is one of the three key subjects studied, the other two being mathematics and Chinese.

The syllabus for Middle Schools is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Textbooks are also supplied from the Ministry's own publishing house (People's Education Publishing House).

Students have five hours of English a week. On the whole, the teaching of English in the Middle Schools tends to be of a very traditional kind and, particularly in rural areas, there are problems in the supply of adequately qualified teachers. Foreign teachers do not generally teach in Middle Schools, except occasionally in Pilot Middle Schools attached to Foreign Languages Institutes, etc.

Entry to University from Middle School is the national examination referred to above. English is one of the subjects included in the examination.

Only about one in six candidates gets a place at university. The pressure on places is, however, easing slightly as universities expand their facilities.

Approximate calculations indicate that less than one in ten thousand Chinese has the chance of a university education. The ratio varies greatly between cities and countryside, however.

University Level

The normal length of a university course is four years. During the first two years every student must study a foreign language in addition to his specialist subject. This is usually English.

Normally such teaching is undertaken by a so-called English Teaching Group within the main department of English. This type of course is labelled General English (Gonggong yingyu) to distinguish it from the 'English majors'.

It is emphatically not English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Only rarely, and in some universities, do selected students continue English into their third year, concentrating on reading scientific textbooks in their special fields. Most teachers of General English tend to regard it as less prestigious than work with the English majors.

Of the approximately 700 university-level institutions in China, about half have departments of English (major subject). The most important centres for English studies, however, are fewer in number (perhaps twenty). They include the Foreign Languages Institutes (especially Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou), Beijing University, Fudan University (Shanghai), Zhongshan University (Guangzhou), Nanjing University, etc, which tend to head the English Studies league table.

The first two years are spent following a basic course to cover all the elements of English. In the final two years there is an introduction to English literature (survey course and selected readings) and background to UK and US and, increasingly, to content subjects such as social studies, linguistics, etc. Some of the basic courses continue through the four years. In general students will not have read very extensively by the time they graduate. One or two novels and a heterogeneous selection of extracts is the most that can be expected. This is however changing as the supply of books becomes more plentiful.

Universities are more or less free to decide on the content of their own courses and on the textbooks they use. The options are:

- Courses produced in China (both Beijing and Shanghai Foreign Languages Institutes publish courses which are widely used. Both are being revised. Guangzhou Foreign Languages Institute will shortly produce a communicative course, etc).
- Local unauthorised editions of foreign textbooks (eg New Concept English, Kernel Lessons Intermediate, etc).
- Imported foreign textbooks (used mainly on courses run by foreign teachers).

Teacher Training

Pre-service training institutions include:

- Teachers' Universities (Shifan Daxue). These institutions come directly under the Ministry of Education. They run four-year courses leading to a degree directly comparable with other universities. They are intended to supply teachers to tertiary level institutions, but in fact by no means all their graduates go into teaching. (And many teachers are recruited from ordinary universities or institutes.) From this it will be inferred that the pedagogical element in courses is far smaller than their name would suggest.
- Teacher Training Colleges (Shifan Xueyuan). These usually come under the provincial or municipal authority and train teachers for the Junior and Senior Middle Schools. Courses usually last three years, though in many cases they are being upgraded and lengthened to four years. Most of the graduates are assigned to teaching jobs so the role of pedagogy is somewhat more important. But as far as English is concerned, courses are designed chiefly for language improvement rather than English Language Teaching (ELT) methodology. (Primary teacher training colleges which often come under the local county are not dealt with here since they do not train teachers of English, even though English is taught in them.)

In-service Training

Education Colleges/Institutes: (Jiaoyu Xueyuan). These institutions usually come under the provincial authorities (eg Jiangsu Education Institute, Nanjing). Their role is partly to remedy the ravages of the Cultural Revolution by offering 'post facto' training to teachers who had none when they were appointed. These courses generally last two years. They also run shorter one-semester (five month) courses for young teachers who have only just started teaching.

Advanced Teacher Training Courses: These are the successors to the one-semester courses run over a three-year period in twenty-four selected centres (1980-83). There will be at least six such courses by 1984 (Beijing Foreign Languages Institute; Guangzhou Foreign Languages Institute; Jiaotong University, Shanghai; Qinghua University, Beijing; Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute; Nanjing University). All six with British Council-recruited staff. The aim is to train senior staff of English departments (both in English major departments and General English groups). Courses are to last one or two years. In the latter case an MA will be granted on presentation of a dissertation in the third year.

Middle School Teacher Training Courses: These will also begin to be set up in 1983 at approximately eight centres. They will train senior middle school staff in two-year courses.

Ad hoc training courses: Many universities or institutes have set up their own teacher training courses. These are often purely for the training of their own younger teachers, but there are also courses which cover costs by bringing in teachers from nearby institutes as well.

In general there is considerable freedom in planning the syllabus and content of teacher training courses, and a wide variety of materials is used.

Non-formal and Adult Education

Starting in 1983 there has been a proliferation of spare time/evening schools for those unable to enter full-time tertiary education. One of the major innovations brought in by these schools is that they are fee-paying (and some of them quite expensive by Chinese standards). They rely for the most part on the use of part-time staff, whose full-time jobs are in the university sector. It is too soon to offer a judgement on their effectiveness.

TV Universities, etc

The TV University network was started in 1979 and draws much of its inspiration from the Open University system in Britain. There is a Central TV University, together with twenty-nine Provincial TV Universities, working through 450 branch schools and study centres. According to the latest estimate some 1,200,000 students have been enrolled overall since 1979.

Currently some 300,000 students are officially enrolled (ie have passed the entrance examinations). An unquantifiable number of students follow these courses without being enrolled (such students can, however, sit the examinations if they wish).

The major difference between the OU and the TVU is that in China the students are full-time students. They spend much of their time in the branch schools following conventional lectures, and watch the "talking head" lectures which are broadcast over the TV. Most programmes, even in the provinces, are simply repeats of the Central TV University's broadcasts.

This sector is due for major changes. A World Bank loan of \$60 million has been agreed (starting in 1984) to develop TV Universities and Polytechnics. Much of this money will be spent on the Central TV University and nine 'key' provincial TV Universities to develop their technical capacity (Production Centres/transmission stations) and a further twelve will benefit in minor ways.

The Central TV University has been engaged since 1980 in producing a new beginners' English course (with British Council support). So far no programmes have been produced but the deadline is 1984!

Whatever happens, this sector is bound to become more important in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. The capacity of the conventional university system to absorb students is severely limited and the demand is growing geometrically.

CCTV (Central China Television): The education section of CCTV has also been active in the transmission of English teaching programmes. Many of these are purchased from the BBC through the intermediary of the British Council in China; Follow Me, People You Meet, On We Go, Sadrina Project, etc.

Follow Me, in particular, has had an enormous impact on individuals learning English on their own. It was presented by a British Council-recruited teacher, Katherine Flower, who became almost a cult figure.

There is also a programme for more advanced learners entitled English on Sundays, which will shortly be using the BBC's Bid For Power. It is presented by a British Chinese who frequently calls on the British Council for assistance with arranging interviews, etc (the Director-General of the British Council was interviewed by her).

Audience sizes are difficult to estimate with accuracy. About one-third of the population has access to TV, and this will go up to almost 100% when the Chinese communications satellite comes into service in 1984-85. 100,000,000 would be a fair estimate for popular programmes.

Professional Associations and Organisations

There is no TESOL-China, or anything approaching it. There are, however, national and provincial associations for the teaching of English, or English literature. These organisations periodically organise meetings and conferences. (The major conferences, eg on Materials for ESP in Xian 1983, are however organised by the Ministry of Education.) It is unusual for foreigners to be invited to attend or contribute to these meetings.

Some sense of professional solidarity is given by journals, eg Waiyu Jiaoxue Yu Yanjiu (English Teaching and Research, published by Beijing Foreign Languages Institute); Xiandai Waiyu (Contemporary Foreign Languages, published by Guangzhou Foreign Languages Institute); English Language Teaching, published by Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute. Most of the articles are in Chinese.

Circulation figures for such journals are astronomical by our standards. Waiyu Jiaoxue Yu Yanjiu claims a 30,000 circulation for instance.

3. TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

It is unusual for people to be able to choose their profession in China. Normally people are 'assigned' to a job. In the technical sense therefore there is never any shortage of teachers. Overall statistics would be meaningless, even if accurate ones were accessible (which they are not). But it is not uncommon, in the tertiary sector, for the teacher-student ratio to be 1:5. This does not mean that students are taught in tutorial groups of 5! The effective ratio is more like 1:20+. The discrepancy is accounted for by the fact that many teachers on the roll do not in fact teach, or teach very little. This may be because they are very old or otherwise incapacitated (eg by not speaking English very well), or because they have been assigned 'other work'. One needs also to keep in mind that the average hours for a Chinese university teacher are between six and ten per week.

Statistics are likewise difficult to ascertain for foreign (expatriate) teachers of English in China. The following is guesswork:

Foreign 'experts' 300+

Foreign teachers 400.

Foreign experts are a privileged category. They are entitled to have their return fares paid, to free accommodation, and to salaries in the ¥500-800 range. They are appointed by the Ministry of Education. Foreign teachers are those who have made ad hoc arrangements with individual institutions. They generally pay their own fares and are paid considerably less (¥300 is not unusual), while not enjoying some of the other perks of foreign experts.

Most foreign teachers/experts are involved in teaching at the tertiary level. Their quality and training vary enormously but, unhappily, a majority is still untrained and relatively inexperienced. (The 'See China and Die' brigade.)

There has been, and continues to be, a trend towards employing more expatriate teachers. But the trend has fissive contradictions. On the one hand there is a tendency to go for the cut-price option - the more the merrier irrespective of training and experience. (Many inter-university exchanges between the US and China partake of this characteristic.) On the other hand, the number of properly organised projects (in teacher training or the preparation of Chinese scholars to study abroad) is also increasing, and brings an increased level of professionalism. This duality is liable to persist.

The development of higher level training for university teachers of English (see Section 8 below) offers greater opportunities for British activity in this field. The limit is financial and logistical.

Most Chinese teachers of English receive little or no initial teacher training which could be properly recognised as such. Concentration is upon the acquisition of the language and knowledge about the language/culture. Methodology is very much a neglected option.

Even the many in-service courses concentrate almost exclusively on this, to the detriment of methodology.

4. MATERIALS SUPPORT

At secondary level, the middle schools are supplied by English textbooks published by the Ministry of Education through its own publishing house (People's Education Publishing House). These are dull, traditional in approach, and are designed to inculcate 'correct attitudes' as well as English. There are very few supplementary or foreign published materials at this level, though some key or pilot middle schools do use such materials.

At tertiary level most of the basic needs are covered through home-produced courses (eg The Beijing Foreign Languages Institute course). These are available cheaply.

Increasingly, foreign produced texts are also being used - most often in unauthorised, cheap, local editions (eg New Concept English, Reading and Thinking in English, ALDCE, etc. There is a great shortage of contemporary

English literary texts in the original (whether simplified or not). This is reflected in the very narrow range of reading done by students outside their textbook. However a very wide range of English novels, etc, is now available in Chinese translation.

Hardware/software

Like many third world countries, China is hung up about hardware. The result is that most tertiary institutions, at least, are relatively well equipped with items such as new language laboratories, closed-circuit TV, video studios, etc. But their blackboards are atrocious and they have fewer useful items such as OHPs or good reprographic facilities. One result of this over-concentration on sophisticated, prestigious hardware is a corresponding neglect of software. The tapes used in the language laboratories tend to be of the oral pattern drill variety, and laboratories are not often put to their full potential range of uses.

The same observation can be made of the video systems, which tend to be used for showing feature films (in unauthorised copies) or for transmitting eminent professors in the "talking head" mode of presentation.

Materials needs

There is an enormous need for effective and up-to-date listening materials at all levels, with properly devised work for the student - to use both in the classroom mode and the individual study mode. The same is true for materials to develop effective reading strategies.

In order for these to be effective, however, they have to take the local needs into account. And in order to be implemented at all there needs to be organisational/institutional changes. They would also require to be supported by a teacher-training programme.

Bookshops and libraries

Foreign professional books are not available in Chinese bookshops. However there is a flourishing market in unauthorised printings of foreign books. These are available cheaply in the so-called neibu bookshops ('internal' ie closed to foreigners).

Whenever a new publication is about to appear word goes round very quickly and the edition is rapidly sold out. (The first handbook to accompany the Follow Me TV series - which was for once an authorised edition - came out in a printing of 1,200,000 copies. All were sold out within a day.)

University libraries are not easily usable by students. The books are kept in closed stacks and have to be requested from a catalogue. The catalogue is rarely up to date and frequently inaccurate. Students may also have to wait for a long time before books are available. (And it is not unknown for senior staff to hoard library books for long periods.) Small wonder that many give up. The reading rooms are nonetheless usually crowded, since study space is at a premium. Many foreign language departments have their own reference/reading rooms. Teachers' reading rooms are often quite well stocked. Students' reading rooms, when they exist, tend to have a very limited stock much of which consists of yellowing newspapers and magazines. Sadly, library science in China has not yet caught up with the information explosion. The

arrangements for loans alone suggests an attitude towards books as objects of reverence rather than objects of use.

However many new university libraries are being built, and computerised systems are being installed. It is to be hoped that this will help to make books more readily accessible to students.

5. EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN RELATION TO ENGLISH TEACHING

One would normally expect to have contact with three levels of educational administration: Ministry, provincial, university/college. (See Diagram 1).

Ministry level

The Ministry of Education is the major agency, as might be expected. It is divided into Departments/Bureaux and Enterprises/Institutes. (See Diagram 2.) Foreign agencies and individuals are supposed to channel all business through the Bureau of Foreign Affairs. It is not unusual however, for certain matters, to deal also with the First Department of Higher Education, which has responsibility for all tertiary level institutes under the Ministry of Education. Also with the newly set up Loan Office, which is responsible for the administration of World Bank loans.

Note, too, that the Central TV University comes directly under the Ministry.

Other Ministries: The Ministry of Education does not have a monopoly on education. (See Diagram 3.) Many other ministries run educational establishments (eg the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade is responsible for the Institutes for Foreign Trade in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Tianjin, etc). Each Ministry has a Bureau of Education, which is the usual point of contact. Our major contacts have been with the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; and Ministry of Communications.

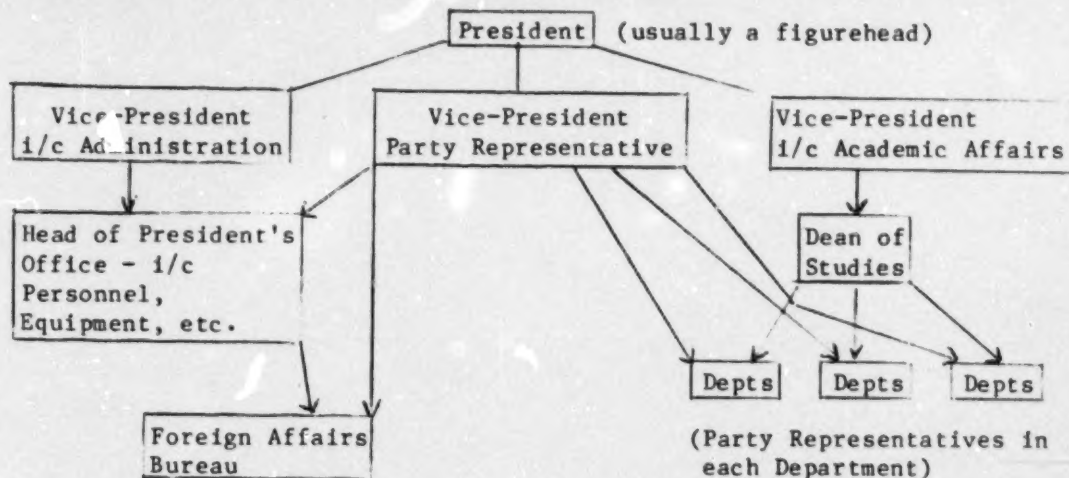
Provincial level

The organisation of the Ministry of Education is mirrored in each of China's twenty-nine provinces. Under the government of each province (Sheng), municipality (shi) or autonomous region (zi zhi qu) there is an Education/Higher Education Department/Bureau, which is a kind of mini-Ministry of Education. Contact is invariably through the Foreign Affairs Bureau of this Department/Bureau. Our most significant contacts at this level are with Hunan and Shanxi provinces, where the Bureaux have direct responsibility for VSO teachers.

University/College level

It is important to remember that China is a communist state, and the Party stands above everything. This is reflected in the structure of all organisations. Within Ministries there is a Party secretary whose job is to see that party policy and ethos is maintained. Within universities and other

tertiary level institutions the structure is somewhat as follows:



Most commonly, first contact with a tertiary level institution is through the Foreign Affairs Office (Waiban). All expatriate teachers come under this department for all their personal affairs. Waiban have widely different reputations for helpfulness and obstructionism. Some are appallingly inefficient, obstructive and even spiteful. One would expect, on professional matters, to deal directly with the Head of the English and Foreign Languages Department. Meetings rarely take place in the absence of a member of the Waiban however.

6. DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING OF THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

This section needs a book to cover it adequately. Luckily there are several which do so (see Section 14, bibliography: Bonavia, Löfstedt).

The Analects of Confucius (Kongfu) are no longer widely studied. The influence of the Confucian educational system is still widespread: respect for teachers and authority; discipline; rote-learning without question; submission to a highly competitive system of examinations - all these continue unabated in the new China.

Overlaying this traditionally rooted structure is the influence of western, and particularly of missionary, education for much of the first half of the twentieth century. (Yanqing University, now Beijing University, was run by Americans for thirty years before 1949.) A concomitant of this was the desire of the new China enthusiasts to learn from abroad, and many went abroad to study in the twenties and thirties, especially to the USA and Japan but also to Western Europe.

For ten years from 1950 the education system came under heavy Soviet Russian influence. And from 1949 onwards education has been subject to the pendulum swings of political fashion (Hundred Flowers, Great Leap Forward, Great Proletarian Revolution, Gang of Four, Four Modernisations).

At any one time there will be 'contradictions' (elitism versus egalitarianism, red versus expert, the need for foreign expertise versus the need to preserve Chinese/Socialist values, political policy versus socio-economic expediency, continuity versus change, freedom versus control, etc). This is of course true in any society, but the contradictions bite deeper into Chinese society than in most others.

At any given time one end of the dialectic will be rising, but the rise is always subject to the possibility of a consequent decline. Keeping your head down is a firmly-rooted strategy for survival in China.

Plans, objectives, syllabuses, etc are all neibu. That is they are, effectively, state secrets, not to be revealed to foreigners. Over the past three years I have asked formally on at least ten occasions to be accorded an interview with a 'responsible person' in the Ministry of Education to discuss the information required for this profile. On the eve of my departure I have still not obtained the interview.

The First Division for Higher Education of the Ministry of Education has, however, instituted a number of 'study groups' which are significant for the way ELT will develop in China:

English Testing Group. This group has now been in existence for about three years. One of its major tasks has been the development and administration of a home-grown Chinese test modelled on TOEFL (EPT - English Proficiency Test). This is administered to those aspiring to overseas study. Failure to 'pass' it means failure to get permission to leave! It has also been responsible for a new end-of-second-year university test which is more communicatively demanding than in the past.

Syllabus Revision Group. This group has produced a draft syllabus for the 'basic course' (ie the first two years of English in the tertiary sector). Rumour has it that it will be far more 'communicative' than past versions. 'Intensive Reading' is said to be out. (The British Council has kept this group supplied with articles, books and sample syllabuses - on a purely unofficial level.)

Materials Evaluation and Selection Group. A group set up to select foreign published materials for Chinese training courses. This has so far resulted in the production of a list of recommended books for each level.

Textbook Writing Groups. The Ministry of Education has designated various institutions as textbook producers. These include: Beijing Foreign Languages Institute (revision of present course), Guangzhou Foreign Languages Institute (completely new course, CECL, on communicative principles), Jiaotong University, Shanghai (ESP course).

British Council teachers have been or are involved in all these efforts.

One of the interesting points to note is the relatively small number of people involved in all the above. The same names seem to crop up in connection with whatever project is under discussion.

7. ENGLISH OUTSIDE THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

This is not relevant to China.

8. BRITISH SUPPORT FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

The British Council, with ODA funding, has recruited and services twenty-eight teachers in 1983. (Numbers are likely to rise in 1984.) These are:

Beijing Foreign Languages Institute:

- three lecturers for the two-year Advanced Teacher Training Course
- one lecturer in English Literature; partly for the same programme, partly for postgraduate work.

Shanghai Jiaotong University:

- three lecturers for the one-year Advanced Teacher Training Course for teachers of Service English (Gonggong Yingyu)
- one lecturer for work with postgraduates and staff, and on the development of a new syllabus for the department.

Guangzhou Foreign Languages Institute:

- two lecturers for the two-year Advanced Teacher Training Course
- two lecturers for the Middle School Teacher Training Course
- two lecturers to work on the textbook development of the Guangzhou Communicative Course (CECL).

Central TV University:

- one lecturer working on the production of the new beginners' English course and teacher training materials in connection with it.

Beijing Institute for Foreign Trade:

- one lecturer running the internal teacher training course
- one lecturer working with senior students and postgraduates on ESP.

Beijing University:

- one lecturer for undergraduates and the teacher training group.

Nanjing University:

- one lecturer for undergraduates and postgraduates in applied linguistics.

Jiangsu Education College, Nanjing:

- one lecturer for the Middle School in-service training course.

Xian Foreign Languages Institute:

- two lecturers in the UNDP-funded project for training Chinese trainees to go abroad (ESP).

Zhejiang University, Hangzhou:

- one lecturer for the internal teacher training course.

Sichuan Foreign Languages Institute:

- two lecturers to undergraduates, postgraduates and teachers' groups.

Chengdu University of Science and Technology:

- one lecturer for an intensive course for teachers of science and technology.

Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute:

- one lecturer for undergraduates and postgraduates in applied linguistics
- one lecturer for an experimental undergraduate class and to work with the textbook revision group.

The trend is away from single posts and towards projects and concentration. In 1984 there will be six advanced teacher training projects (rather than three as at present) plus a British Centre for training the Chinese postgraduates due to proceed to the UK for study.

It should be noted that all these projects include a Chinese counterpart training component. Thirteen Chinese lecturers will go to the UK for one year's training in 1984-85, twenty-three in 1985-86.

Each year the British Council supplies teams of three lecturers for four three-month courses at places proposed by the Ministry of Education. There is also a variable number of specialists in ELT and English Studies visiting China for periods of one to three months each year.

All the above rely almost exclusively on teaching materials published in the UK and provided by the Council with ODA funds.

Through the English Teaching Resource Centre, the distribution of the English Teaching Newsletter and the organisation of lectures, workshops, etc on Embassy premises, the British Council maintains close links with the English teaching community.

9. AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Official USICA support is minimal, and is confined to the Fulbright Programme (twelve lecturers per year). In fact the trend has been away from English Studies and towards Content Studies in politics, economics, history, social studies, etc.

There are a number of US university projects in China, the most important of which are the three UCLA projects:

GELC (Guangzhou English-Language Centre) at Zhongshan University:

- a five-year project set up in 1980 to train Chinese scientists and technicians for study in the USA.

Beijing Institute for International Economic Relations:

- likewise a five-year project from 1980 to train Chinese in the fields of foreign trade, law, etc.

Beijing Graduate School:

- similar to GELC for postgraduate pre-departure training.

There are a large number of US-China university links. These frequently involve the short-term (one semester to one year) attachment of US staff to teach in China. This applies also to US research students who have no expertise or experience of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). All part of the cut price option referred to earlier.

On the co-operation front, there are regular meetings between all the cultural affairs officers of friendly embassies in Beijing. These are chiefly for the purpose of information exchange.

The British Council Resource Centre extends its services to all teachers of English, irrespective of nationality.

10. OTHER AGENCY SUPPORT

ADAB (Australian Development and Aid Bureau)

A fully-funded three-year project was set up in 1981 to establish a training centre in the Beijing Second Foreign Languages Institute. The object was to train Chinese scientific and technical personnel before their departure for Australia. Also to train fifty Chinese teachers of English associated with the project at the Canberra Institute of Education. Additionally there have been a number of on-site ESP training projects (Capital Hospital, Beijing; Tianjin Chinese Aeronautical Aviation Corporation and Kunming Cattle Raising Corporation). ADAB has provided Australian staff (about eight or ten) and equipment throughout.

CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency)

A project began early in 1983 at the Beijing Institute for Foreign Trade, to train Chinese scientific and technical personnel before departure for Canada. It now has a staff of eight Canadians. Training in Canada is provided for Chinese counterpart teachers.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)

A three-year programme of pre-departure training begun in 1980 is just coming to an end. Three centres were set up in Beijing Second Foreign Languages Institute, Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute and Xian Foreign Languages Institute. The first two had US staffing organised from Georgetown University. Xian has been staffed by British Council-recruited teachers. There has been provision for counterpart training of Chinese teachers, and nine teachers from Xian have had a year's training at Lancaster University.

It is shortly to be decided whether or not this training network will continue with outside support, or whether staffing will from now on be provided by UN volunteers.

UN volunteers have been placed in a number of projects which have other forms of UN support. These tend to be in colleges and institutes of agriculture, forestry, geology, aviation, etc. At present there are about twelve UN volunteers.

VIA (Volunteers in Asia)

VIA operates out of Stanford University, California. Some seventeen volunteers are currently working in China. All of them come under the Ministry for the Iron and Steel Industry.

VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas)

There are at present fourteen VSOs working in seven institutions (four in Hunan province, three in Shanxi province). They are the direct responsibility of the British Council.

World Bank Agricultural Training Centres

There are two language training centres, at the Central China Agricultural College in Wuhan and the Beijing Forestry College in Beijing. Both Centres are run by Bell Education Trust under the terms of \$2 million contract won in the face of stiff US competition (mainly from UCLA). The contract runs for three years and each centre has ten UK staff, including a teacher trainer and a secretarial skills trainer.

We enjoy very good relations with all these various agencies, and with their teachers. We are actively involved with the UNDP and VSO programmes, and have frequently been called upon to advise the others (eg when the ADAB, CIDA and UND programmes were being planned and set up). We have extended our Resource Centre materials to all, and in some cases this has saved projects from foundering in the early stages. We played a key role in the negotiations for the World Bank Agricultural Language Training Centres and our English Language Officer is a member of the advisory board for these centres. Teachers from most of these projects are regular visitors to the Resource Centre, and take part in events for teachers organised at the Embassy.

11. COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Generally speaking, prospects are not good. China operates very tight foreign currency control and is skilful at getting many things free, most often by playing off countries against each other in their race for friendship with China. One of the biggest potential baits for foreign firms is the size of China's population. But all too often the saliva provoked by thoughts of sales to one billion people dries in the throat when the realities of dealing with China begin to dawn!

Books and other software

China is not a signatory to any international copyright convention. Sales are therefore severely limited since allocations of foreign currency to universities are relatively small, and the ordering procedure is cumbersome.

Unauthorised copying is rife. The best opportunities at present arise from the World Bank Higher Education loan to twenty-six universities. Part of this \$200 million loan has been set aside for book purchase, and the Chinese government has agreed to match this sum with an equal amount of foreign currency of its own for book purchase. The British Council has been active, with the Book Development Council of the British Publishers Association, in ensuring that British books get their fair share of the market, but little of this is likely to be ELT material.

Some British publishers such as OUP, Longman and Macmillan, are pursuing co-publishing ventures with Chinese publishing houses. However, the agreements signed are rarely of much profit to the UK publisher.

Hardware

The market for TEFL hardware is virtually monopolised by Sony and Tandberg.

Examinations

A small pilot scheme has been undertaken to administer the Cambridge Syndicate examinations in China. However, Cambridge has agreed to waive fees. Few, if any, Chinese would have the money, let alone the foreign currency, to pay our fees. (And few so far have been able to obtain permission to sit foreign examinations.)

Information and advice

The Chinese reckon to get this free. The idea of paid consultancies, though not entirely unknown to them, remains one they would prefer not to get better acquainted with.

Services within the country

The Chinese do not expect to pay for recruitment services. Experience shows, alas, that all too many people are happy to recruit themselves for free.

Services sought in Britain

Some Chinese visiting scholars and postgraduate students need language tuition on arrival. This is usually arranged either by our Technical Cooperation Training Department (TCTD) or the Chinese Embassy and paid for by the latter. There is no scope for language schools to tout for custom in China itself.

Teacher training

This is likewise usually arranged under one of the scholarship schemes. There is little if any scope for direct contact and placement from China.

This bleak prospect is lightened slightly by two new factors: World Bank loans and joint venture petroleum industry projects. The Bell Education Trust success story is an example of the former. And it is likely that there may be other language or teacher training centres set up under the TV University/Polytechnic loan and the Public Health loan. These centres, once operating, open up the possibility of training in Britain too.

There are, so far, no examples of language training centres in connection with British petroleum joint ventures (though there is one set up by Totale-China in Zhanjiang). The recent BP and Shell-Exxon off-shore exploration contracts and the concomitant development of oil-servicing agencies should offer good opportunities for enterprise, however.

12. CREATIVE WRITING

There is a national Writers Association which has regular links with, for example, PEN International. However it is wholly dedicated to writers in Chinese.

As indicated earlier there are numerous Chinese publishing houses, many of which publish in English (there is a Directory of Publishing Establishments in China).

13. CURRENT RESEARCH

Higher degrees were only reintroduced in 1979, and then only in a limited number of selected universities and institutes. It is now possible to study for an MA (sometimes a two-year course but usually a two-year course plus one year for dissertation) or, exceptionally, for a PhD.

Approval for setting up postgraduate programmes is given by the State Council. Most universities view their postgraduate programmes as a way of training younger staff to take over from the dwindling number of 'real' scholars left in the departments.

Research facilities, however, leave much to be desired, and it is not uncommon to be asked to provide the original texts for Hardy, Lawrence, etc for post-graduates who are writing papers on these authors! There is likewise a severe shortage of up-to-date critical material.

The most important part of most postgraduate programmes is still taught classes; the dissertations are almost always highly derivative and incorporate long chunks hewn directly from the original sources. In other words post-graduate work, in a majority of cases, is regarded much more as a continuation at a higher level of undergraduate work than as a field for independent research. This is perhaps in part a reflection of the powerful influence of the American university system.

Apart from the Ministry of Education-inspired projects referred to in Section 6 above, I know of no significant research projects. The UCLA teams claim that one of their reasons for being in China is research, and they produce impressive looking lists of projects. However it is not my impression that these have so far come to anything very substantial.

There are, however, a few centres where research can be expected to occupy a more important role in future:

- Fudan University, Shanghai: has a Shakespeare Research Institute, and is running a Chinese-English lexicology project which will result in a new dictionary.
- Jiaotong University, Shanghai: designated by the MoE for developing ESP materials. Work into computer applications is also proceeding.
- Guangzhou Foreign Languages Institute: in the early stages of setting up an Applied Linguistics Research Institute. Also the focus of development of the GELC materials. Strong on testing.
- Nanjing University: strong interest in contemporary literature, as yet unbacked by solid research.
- Beijing University: mainly literary interests. Again focuses most strongly on research by a few gifted individuals. (A young staff member at present studying for a PhD at Harvard will perhaps make some startling changes on his return.)
- Beijing Foreign Languages Institute: strong interest in 'Celtic' literature (MacDiarmid, Joyce, etc). Also in contemporary drama. Strong interest too in testing and applied linguistics generally.
- Wuhan University) both have highly respected
- Zhongshan University, Guangzhou) Departments of English.
- Institute for Research in Foreign Literature, China Academy of Social Sciences: has some highly respected serious scholars doing work on English literature of all periods.
- Institute of Linguistics, Chinese Academy of Sciences: likewise a fully-fledged research institute, involved chiefly in theoretical research.

There are a number of fledgling links between Chinese and British institutions:

- Fudan and Leeds have a formal link. At present four staff members from Fudan English Department are in Leeds. The lexicology link is the most significant.
(Fudan also has informal relations with the Shakespeare Research Institute in Stratford.)
- Jiaotong, Shanghai and Birmingham. There are informal links at department level in ESP materials and computer applications.
- Beijing Foreign Languages Institute. There is an incipient link with Lancaster University which will shortly be strengthened through the counterpart training scheme.
- Guangzhou Foreign Language Institute. A link will possibly be developed with Edinburgh University or the Institute of Education, London University.

Until now it has been necessary to juggle for funds to send Chinese ELT and English specialists to the UK on scholarships, visitorships etc. In the current year we have secured one Hornby award plus six scholarships

(additional to the official schemes which all concentrate on other areas of study), and have assisted four or five others with part-funding to attend conferences etc.

There are, additionally, five young teachers from Xian FLI at Lancaster under the UNDP Scheme and twelve at Saffron Walden with Bell.

Next year the prospect is slightly brighter with additional funds for FCO awards, some of which may well be in English Studies and for the training of counterpart teachers in the UK (thirteen in 1984-85, twenty-three in 1985-86). We also hope to be able to secure one or two Hornby awards, and to fund up to five Chinese participants on the Cambridge English Studies Seminar and two or three on other literature, English studies or teacher training courses.

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British Council reports. These fall into four main categories:

ELO's reports, the latest being Report after 3 years as ELO China.

British Council-subsidised lecturers' reports.

Short course reports and reports by visiting specialists.

Reports by visiting delegations (eg Report of British ELT Delegation to China, November 1982).

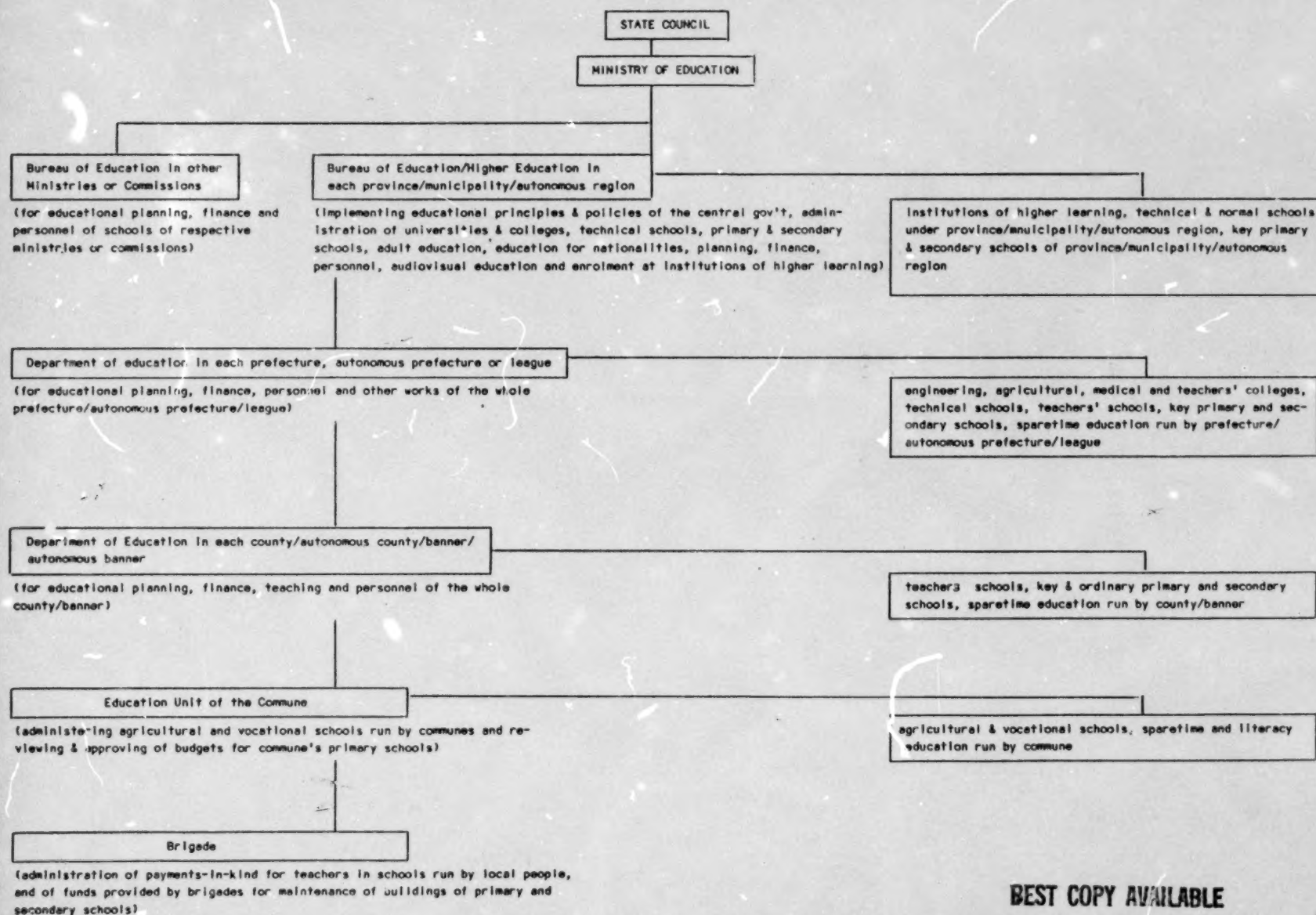
Radio & Television Universities in China. - A Directory of Publishing Establishments in China. - Statistics of Chinese Education at all levels in 1980. - Key Universities and Colleges of the PRC.

15. GENERAL STATEMENT

The major problems for the teaching of English in China remain the scale of the task, the power of an entrenched political bureaucracy and the persistence of a traditional style of learning which runs counter to most of what is currently acceptable elsewhere.

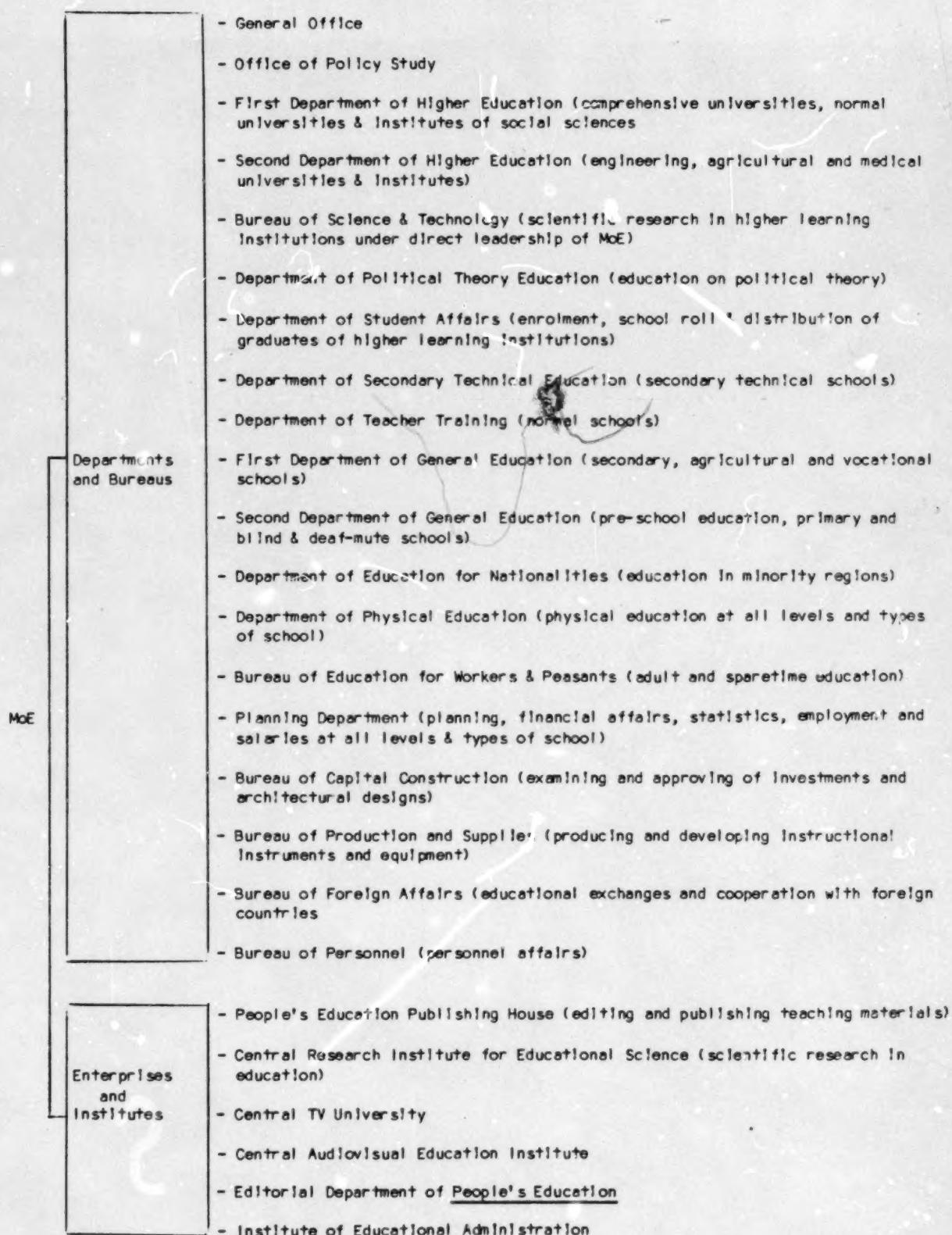
On the credit side there is enormous learner motivation. And there are signs of movement in the English Studies field (syllabus reform, textbook revision, test development, TV and distance teaching, etc). But it would be rash to suppose that such changes will come about quickly or easily. They will continue to require the exercise of enormous patience and effort.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF CHINA



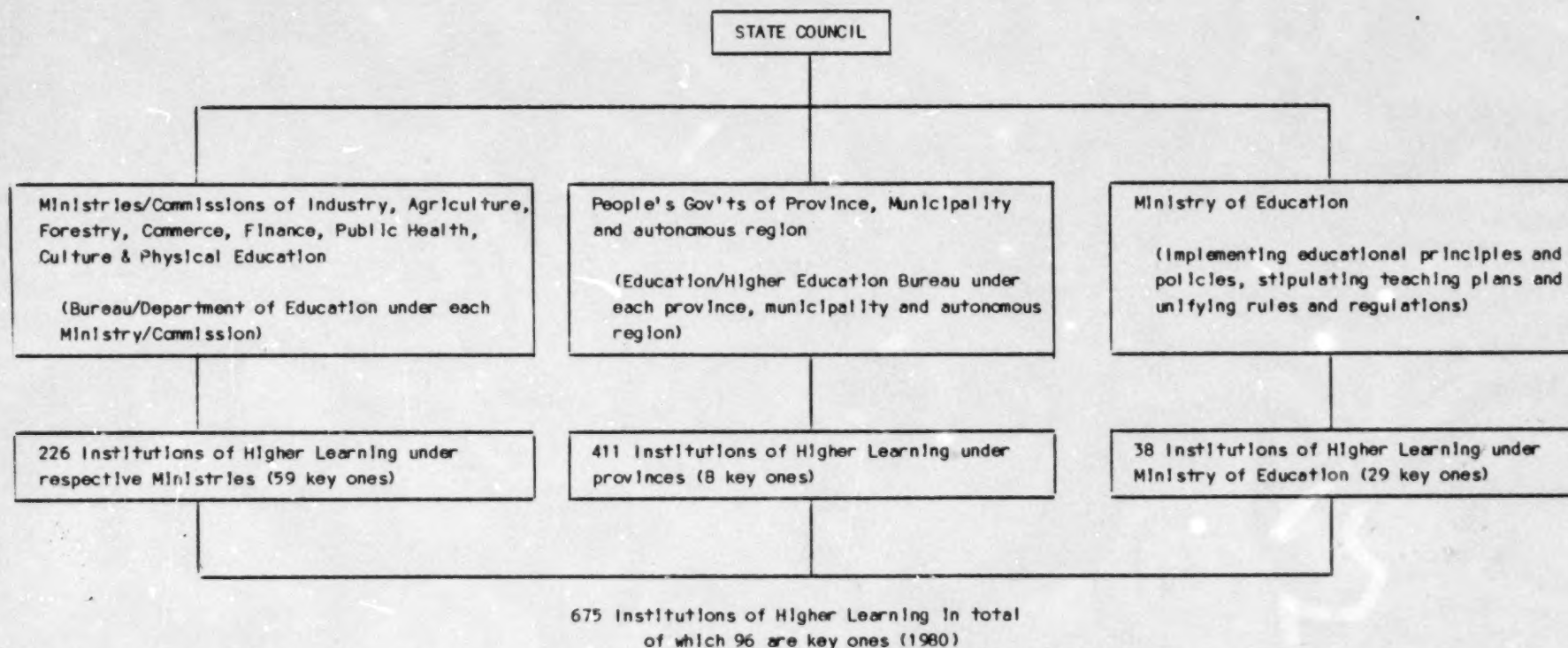
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ORGANISATION OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (MoE) OF CHINA



Source: The Chinese Education Association for International Exchanges, 1980

SYSTEM OF MANAGEMENT OF INSTITUTIONS OF
HIGHER LEARNING IN CHINA



Source: The Chinese Education Association for International Exchanges, 1980